

RUSSIA AND THE WEST IN IRAN

competed with the Zoroastrians for Soviet favors by organizing fiestas for the Red Army soldiers and gathering funds for Soviet charitable purposes. In order to obtain funds the main Committee of Aid and its subsidiaries were active in organizing musical shows, dances, and even a nation-wide lottery. It was obvious that these sums, however large from the point of view of individual donors, were insignificant in comparison with the vast destruction in the Soviet areas. Their significance lay in the field of propaganda. The more that people gave to the Soviet cause, the greater the impression that friendship toward Russia was spontaneous.

No field was neglected and no opportunity was lost to further Soviet publicity. Even the drivers transporting lend-lease supplies to Russia through Iran were given proper attention. In the summer of 1944 the Soviet Embassy gave medals to thirty-five Iranian truck drivers for their good performance. The ceremony was attended by the Iranian Minister of Communications and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.

THE CENSORSHIP

While all these means were used as positive mediums of Soviet propaganda, care was simultaneously taken to prevent the spread of information unacceptable to the Soviet authorities. The instrument that served the latter purpose was the Anglo-Soviet-Persian Censorship created in accordance with the provisions of the Tripartite Treaty of January 29, 1942. The censorship worked on the principle of unanimity. The veto of any one of the three censors was sufficient to bar the news from publication. In practice, the veto was a privilege of the Soviet censor, because the Iranian

the censor was only a figurehead and the powers of the British censor were limited by special circumstances. This limitation on the British censor was due to the fact that censorship, according to the inter-Allied agreement, was to apply only to news released by private news agencies and not to government-published statements. As Reuters was a privately owned agency (the British government always took pains to insist upon it), censorship applied to its releases. Since, on the other hand, Tass was a government-owned agency, the Soviet censor took the stand that all Tass releases represented official Soviet government